

Companion Web Site

Examples, useful links, and more
Additional information

Philip Crowder with David A. Crowder

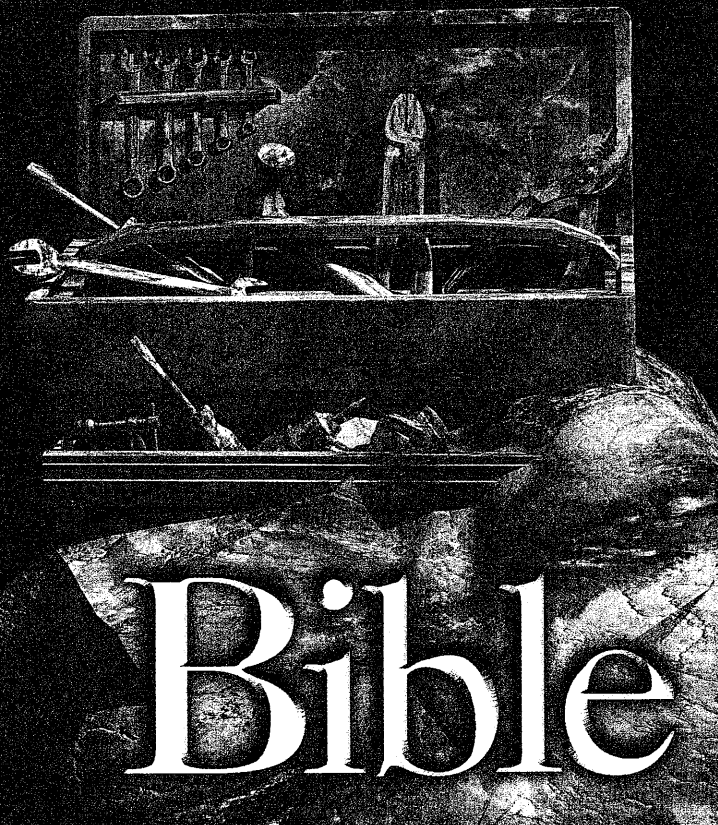
Creating Web Sites

Third Edition

Master the major
site-building tools

Go 2.0 with multimedia
and interactivity

Create a store and
cash in on e-commerce



Bible

The book you need to succeed!

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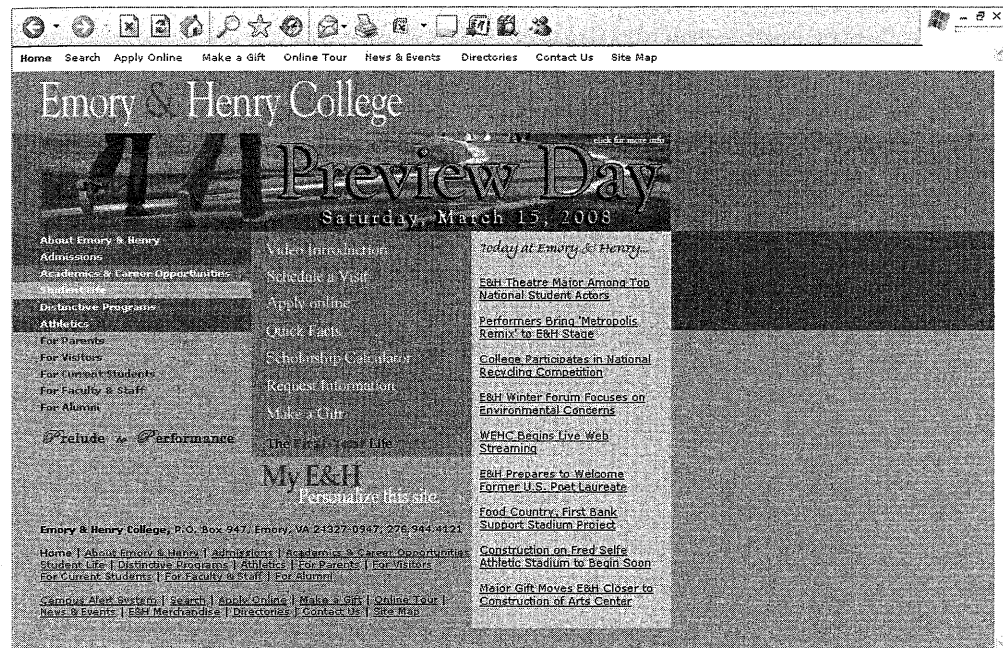
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FIGURE 1-5

Home page of Emory and Henry College.



CROSS-REF Chapter 4 provides more information about designing the structure of the Web site. At this point, however, you should at least appreciate the criticality of sitting down and drawing out your site before doing the fun stuff (the content).

Though it is tempting to try to create the latest “gee whiz” site utilizing all sorts of bells and whistles to dazzle your peers, the plain truth is that Web sites are not only as good as their designers; they are also only as good as their users’ connection to the Internet, their users’ Web browsers, their users’ screen resolution, and their users’ general level of comfort with navigating the Web.

So, plan wisely — and well.

Analyzing Web Site Types

You could argue endlessly about how to categorize the overwhelming variety of sites on the World Wide Web. For all practical purposes, however, there are only five basic types of sites:

- Personal
- Informational

Part I

Laying the Foundation

- Organizational
- Political
- Commercial

As with any attempt at *taxonomy* (that is, the art of lumping disparate entities into categories based on similarities), there are gray areas, fuzzy situations, and downright overlaps. What do you make of a personal home page that's largely political? In the system discussed here, it's still a personal home page. What about a genealogy site? Is that an extension of a personal home page, or is it an informational site? We vote for it being informational, and labeling a site "personal" only if its focus is limited to an individual and his or her immediate family and friends.

To categorize sites, the basic method we use is to try to determine the intent of the Web site. If it's to make money, then it's a commercial site, no matter what other angles there are to it. If it's to promote a particular candidate in an election, then it's a political site, even if it's made by one individual.

Personal home pages

Personal home pages exist for the purpose of introducing individuals to the world. Despite the phrase "personal home page" (which has become generically accepted as a description of this type of Web site), some personal sites involve many different Web pages and can be as elaborate as a corporate Web site. Generally speaking, the information in them is somewhat limited in scope, appealing mainly to the close friends and immediate family of the person involved. This isn't to say that some of them aren't very interesting, indeed. As with any other type of site, a carefully designed and well-written production is a real joy to explore and experience.

Just as when talking to strangers at a party you'd find some people are fascinating and have great stories to tell, whereas others send you running from the room (yawning from the boredom), personal Web sites can be a similar experience. Some home pages grab you, and others make you wish you had never clicked that link.

When putting together a personal site, it's a good idea to open up yourself as much as possible within your comfort level. The best personal sites enable you to get to know the people who created them. By the time you're done browsing these sites, you feel as if you could sit down to dinner with their authors and talk as if old friends. This isn't to say that you must spill your guts about every detail of your personal life, but the site is about you — and if *you* aren't really in it, what's the point of creating it?

Informational sites

Sites that are dedicated to providing information on a particular topic are common on the Web. If they weren't, it would be a pretty boring place. In fact, most people use the Web primarily to find the answer to some sort of question. Many of the informational Web sites are run by public-minded organizations whose goal is simply to make the public aware of particular issues.

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The Basics of Building Web Pages and Sites

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The Daily Kos political blog, for example, provides much needed clarification about the confusing political situation within the Democratic party and the state of our nation at www.dailykos.com.

Search engines, on the other hand, are a perfect example of the kind of gray area discussed earlier, where it's difficult to slot many of them into one category. The vast majority of them are commercial operations designed to generate advertising revenue. Some of them even rank the results by how much they're paid instead of by true relevance. But the only interest that Web surfers have in them is to find information. The same is true of news sites.

Another type of informational site is one that offers a limited amount of information at no charge but that provides a greater amount for a fee. Spanish Learning Resources (www.studyspanish.com) is a prime example of this. The site, shown in Figure 1-7, provides about as much training as you would get in a typical first-year Spanish language course for free. If you simply need to understand such niceties as why *ser* and *estar* both mean "to be" or need a basic grasp of Spanish vocabulary and grammar, visit this site at www.studyspanish.com. (You should still pick up a copy of *Spanish for Dummies*, though — you never know when your Internet connection might go down.)

FIGURE 1-6

Political blogs can increase public awareness on civic concerns.

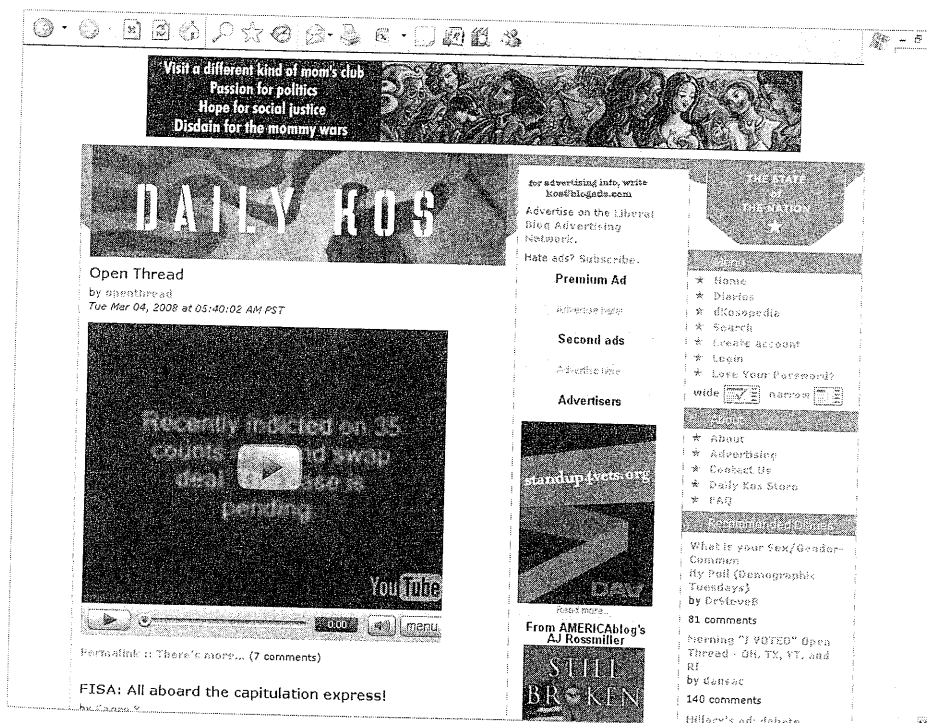


FIGURE 1-7

Spanish Learning Resources provides both free and premium information services.

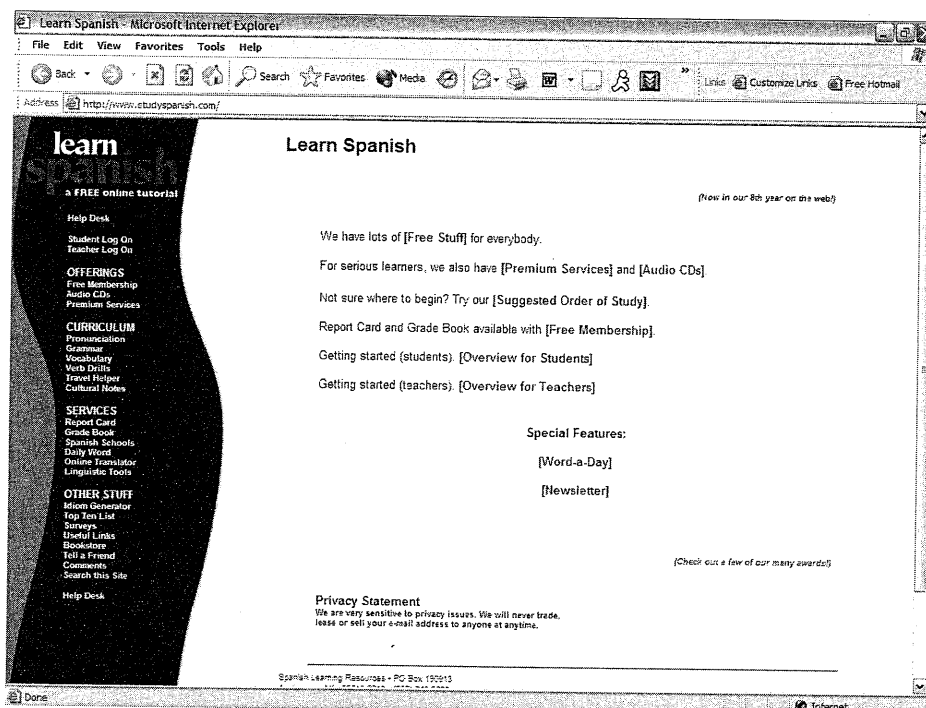


Table 1-1 lists the URLs of several informational sites that you can browse and study.

Organizational sites

Organizational Web sites are concerned with presenting information about — you guessed it — a particular organization. The reason these are distinguished from pure informational sites is their narrow focus. Their sole function is to describe the work of a particular organization, its structure, its personnel, and history. These sites don't diverge from their function at any point — no sidetracks to outside issues or topics exist, except for occasional links to other sites that partner with or support the goals and purposes of the organization.

As shown in Figure 1-8, the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) site, located at ietf.cnri.reston.va.us, is a classic example of an organizational site. It covers everything from the structure of the organization to the process for joining it.

Table 1-2 gives the addresses of some organizational sites on the World Wide Web.

TABLE

Site

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[CIA World](#)

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[King Arthur](#)

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TABLE 1-1

Informational Web Sites

Site	URL
AcqWeb's Directory of Book Reviews on the Web	acqweb.library.vanderbilt.edu/ acqweb/bookrev.html
AnyWho	www.tollfree.att.net
Catalog of Solar Eclipses	sunearth.gsfc.nasa.gov/eclipse/ SEcat/SEcatalog.html
CIA World Factbook	odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook
CIAC	ciac.llnl.gov/ciac/index.html
Dead People Server	www.dpsinfo.com/dps/
Indiana Department of Agriculture	ai.org/oca
Internet Traffic Report	InternetTrafficReport.com
King Arthur and the Matter of Britain	legends.dm.net/kingarthur
Letters and Dispatches of Horatio Nelson	wtj.com/archives/nelson
Sir Francis Drake	www.mcn.org/2/oseeler/drake.htm
Veterinary Information Network	vin.com

Political sites

Sites that have a political agenda to push aren't limited to dealing with particular candidates for certain offices in election years. Politics isn't all about elections. In our definition, such sites also include those with any social agenda that would be furthered by the passing of appropriate legislation. Thus, Web sites covering issues such as gun control, the medical usage of marijuana, development of wetland areas, or the control of personal information on the Internet — regardless of whether the site's editorial thrust is for or against — would qualify as political sites.

Figure 1-9 shows the Web site for the Democratic National Committee (DNC) at www.democrats.org. It could be argued that it is, in fact, an organizational Web site, representing as it does the DNC, its views, and activities. Because those activities are strictly political, however, it belongs here.

Table 1-3 provides the URLs of several political Web sites.

Commercial sites

This is the one simple, unambiguous area in the taxonomy — if the site is created strictly out of a profit motive, then it's a commercial site. Period. Other sites — particularly political sites — often

engage in some kind of fund-raising activity that is secondary to their main purpose. With purely commercial sites, there is never any doubt — the main thrust is simply “Buy our product or service” or “Support our sponsors.”

The Barnes & Noble Web site (www.bn.com), shown in Figure 1-10, goes straight to the point. It's there for one thing and one thing only — to enable you to find and buy books and music.

Simply accepting advertising or tossing in a few links to a bookstore doesn't magically transform another kind of site into a commercial Web site. There are few sites in any category that do not attempt to raise some money (often unsuccessfully) by a half-hearted foray into banner ads.

Sometimes, especially for sponsored sites or those which are participants in an affiliates program, the “buy” message is so subtle that the commercial nature of the site isn't obvious to the casual visitor. Many times, there is no mention at all of any sales intent, but the site's links lead to sponsored pages.

CROSS-REF See Chapter 24 for more information on affiliates programs and advertising.

FIGURE 1-8

The Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) Web site has a full explanation of the structure, goals, and functions of the organization.

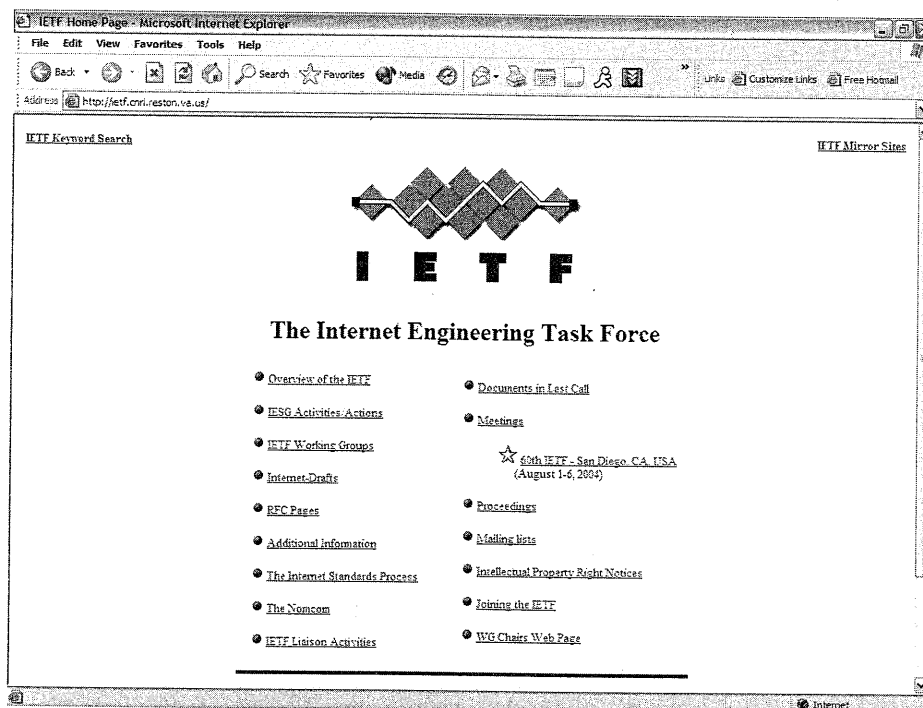


TABLE 1-2

Organizational Web Sites

Site	URL
International Center for Reiki Training	reiki.org
JustLinux	justlinux.com
National Weather Service	www.nws.noaa.gov
Nautical Research Guild	naut-res-guild.org
Nicholas Roerich Museum	roerich.org
Small Business Administration	www.sba.gov
State Library of New South Wales	www.sl.nsw.gov.au
The Naval Dockyards Society	www.hants.gov.uk/navaldockyard
The Royal Society	www.royalsoc.ac.uk
The Society for Creative Anachronism	sca.org
World Wide Web Consortium	w3.org

Table 1-4 guides you to a number of commercial Web sites.

We have just reviewed the five generally accepted categories of Web sites. The success of a Web site is dependent upon how well it defines its potential clientele. There is no monolithic client base, and much research has allowed potential users to be divided into so called B2B (business to business), B2C (business to consumer), C2C (consumer to consumer), and C2B (consumer to business) business categories. Ninety-seven percent of the online market is B2B.

The purpose of the following section is to introduce you to how these online markets are defined so that the categories of Web sites may match the services required of each particular category of user. For example, B2B would be likely to handle services and products that go into the production of a final product. Let's say the construction of this book is an illustration of B2B. We have an author who provides the raw material. We have a development editor and technical editor(s) who refine the raw material and process it into something. The general editor reviews our work and adds the polish. All of that is B2B. The book, when it finally appears at bookstores, is a B2C.

The way you relate to (or market) B2B would be different than the way the book would be presented to you by a bookseller. You structure your online Web site according to the type of clientele you market to.

That is why you need to understand the demographics of the online marketplace.

Part I Laying the Foundation

FIGURE 1-9

The Democratic National Committee site is a prime example of a political Web site.

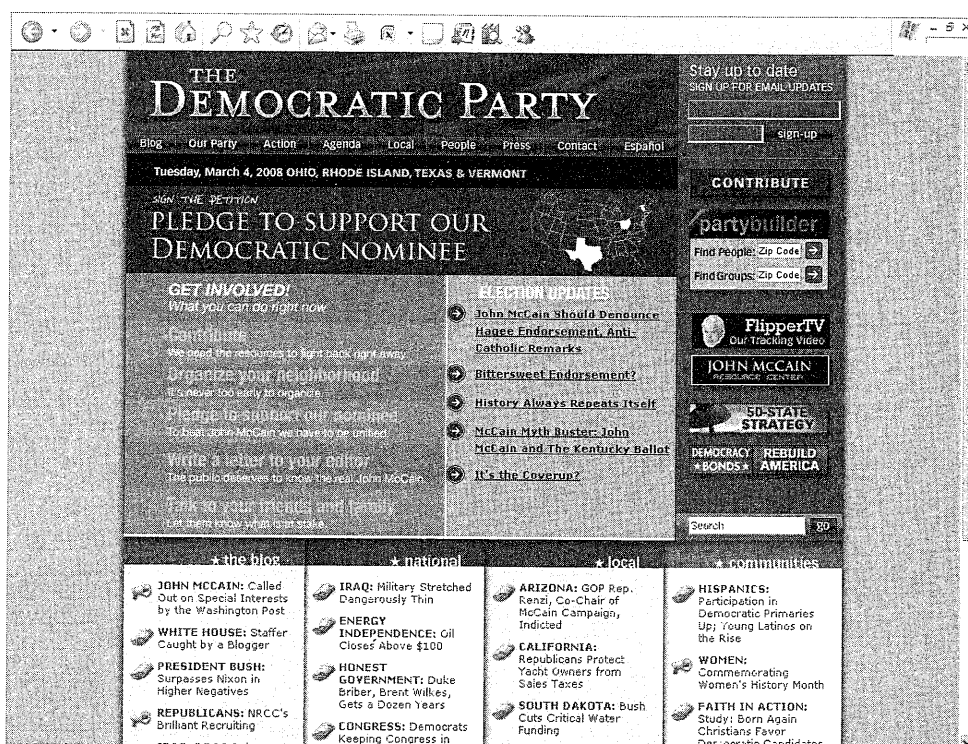


TABLE 1-3

Political Web Sites

Site	URL
Australian Politics Online	www.ozpolitics.com.au
Chinese Politics Online	www.politics.unimelb.edu.au/cpo
Conservative Party Website	www.conservatives.com/home.cfm
Labour Party Website	www.labour.org.uk
Republican National Committee	rnc.org
Southeast European Politics Online	www.seep.ceu.hu
Washington Center for Politics & Journalism	wcpj.org

FIGURE 1-10

The Barnes & Noble Web site is a prime example of a commercial Web site.



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There are many different types of Web sites. As with any other type of Web site, there are many different types of Web sites, and each type has its own unique characteristics.

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It's easy to see how a Web site can be the best way to reach people. The Web is a powerful tool for communication, and it's no wonder that so many businesses and organizations have turned to the Web to reach their target audience.